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of rather level road at the end of the winding stretch. Between the road going toward the shore of the lake and the stream issuing from the lake there is a 3-storied, wooden hotel, which was visited every Sunday by numerous excursionists after the region around the lake had been opened to the public. The vacationers came in trucks from Sukhumi and other coastal cities, spent the day, and returned home in the evening. Round trip fare was 150 rubles. At this hotel the guests received food and refreshment. A short, winding road left the hotel, crossed the stream from the lake to the left of the hotel, and, after about 700 m., reached a rather primitive music pavillion.

5. Following the new lake shore road cut into the rocks, one comes to a road branching to the right about 100 m. below the upper end of the lake. This branch, which is about 12 km. long, rises in sinuous curves and leads to a radioactive spring. At the time of source's departure, October 1948, this road was still under construction, but was scheduled to be completed by the end of 1948.
6. Continuing along the shore road itself, ~~which~~ extends along the 2 km. length of the lake, sometimes very close to the lake's surface and sometimes 15-20 m. above the surface, one reaches the upper part of the lake, where there is a heavily barricaded and enclosed forbidden zone which no PW is allowed to enter and which can be traversed, even on the part of the Soviets, only by those ~~with~~ special passes.
7. At the upper end of the lake, before the road reaches the brook-like tributary, there is a building 200 m. wide with terraces and wings similar to a large sanatorium. Apparently this building is a guest house, which is provided with garages and a boat house and which adjoins an ostentatious park.
8. The road turns here and follows the other shore of the lake. After about one kilometer, it enters a small gorge where Stalin's summer home is located. The house is visible from only a few places on the lake, can not be seen at all from the opposite shore. The villa is several ~~high~~ and built of wood. ~~There are, in addition,~~ two other buildings: a ~~reception~~ building built like a cafe and one small boat house located on the ~~lake~~ shore. Only by chance did one of another PW get to this spot, because under no conditions would the guards let anyone pass the barrier on the regular road. Up to the time of source's departure, October 1948, neither the guest house nor Stalin's lodge had been put to use.
9. A great quantity of technical tools and mechanical implements were available to the PWs employed on the construction of the road. There were four American bulldozers on caterpillar tracks, numerous compressors for stone drills, concrete mixers, and asphalt mixers, as well as a large number of trucks. The trucks had to be used to transport the individual construction gangs from their previous places of work.
10. Wherever possible, blasting was done to facilitate further construction. Material "trains" were set up along precipices difficult to pass, and, where the road proceeded directly into the wilderness, PWs by the hundred were used to transport up the mountain concrete and building materials in sacks on their backs.
11. The shore road and the mountain road leading to the radioactive spring are 6 m. wide in all spots and have a hard asphalt surface. Where blasting the rock did not suffice, foundations were laid in the precipices in order to provide a firm bed for the road. Along the upper part of the road, safety embankments of crushed stone and concrete were put up. Numerous electric lights were visible along the lake road.
12. All the construction material had to be brought to the individual construction sites by truck from the railway station at Bzyb. Near the Bzyb station there was a large concrete dump and an explosive depot for materials used by the Ritsa Valley road construction project.
13. While construction was going on, the region was strongly barricaded against all except the laborers. The first road barricade is said to have been located on the turnpike in Bzyb. Entrance to the valley was forbidden. In the fall of 1948, however, the hotel at the lower end of the lake was opened to public traffic. Needless to say, the safety precautions for the Stalin complex were not modified.

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14. The number of men employed on the construction, regardless of whether or not they were PWs, was estimated by the source at about 10,000, including a group who worked on the details of the small park in the vicinity of the guest house at the upper end of the lake. Up to the time of the source's departure, no reduction in the number of the work force had been made.
15. Everyone was employed on the continuation of the asphalt road up to the radio-active spring, where another hotel or shelter is to be built. Moreover, it is reported that the road is not to end at the spring, but is to be extended across the spurs of the Caucasus mountains, which are not too high here, in the direction of Krasnodar. Source, however, has no personal knowledge of this extension. Work was generally done from dawn to dusk, but continued into the night if the day's task could not be finished in the regular hours.

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Comment:

* Bzyb is probably identical to Koldakhvara (43-14N, 40-23E).

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